



# SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY APRIL 30, 2002

## Milton enjoys eventful return to Jr. B scene

*Mavericks engineer exciting comeback against Spartan Warriors, but fall a little short*

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

*The Champion*

Milton's Jr. B lacrosse team rolled out a seven, although that proved to be anything but lucky at John Tonelli Sports Centre Saturday.

Trailing Spartan 14-13 in the dying moments of the night, the hosts inadvertently sent seven attackers out for a final attempt at the equalizer and got it on a last-second sidarm deposit by Bobby MacDonald.

However, hopes for overtime were short-lived as the tying tally was negated because of too many men — thus crushing the Mavericks' bid for closing out their season-opening weekend in victory.

But Glen Little refused to blame the loss on his club's mix-up or on a referee that only called the goal back after shouts of protest from the visiting bench.

Instead, Milton's head coach shouldered responsibility himself — pointing to his third-period ejection, following a brief outburst for what he felt were a growing series of lousy calls, as the chief cause of defeat.

"I blew it," he said, just moments after Saturday's loss which dropped the returning Mavericks to 0-2. "I cost us the game tonight. I should have been out there with my partner (assistant coach Glen Flippance)."

Nevertheless, Little took solace in his team's much-improved effort over home-opening play against Halton Hills Thursday. Keeping defensive breakdowns to a minimum and stepping things up offensively against Spartan Saturday, Milton erased four and three-goal leads to push their guests to the limit.

### Improved goaltending

Goaltender Josh Arnold — though not exactly spectacular — made some key saves he failed to just a couple of nights earlier while the return of Derek Mewhinney helped spark the front-line attack.

Said Little, "This was the team I've been saying all along will be competitive. They showed a lot of heart tonight."

A pair of concentrated scoring surges and stronger man-to-man coverage allowed the Mavericks to keep pace with Spartan after a rather dismal first 10 minutes.

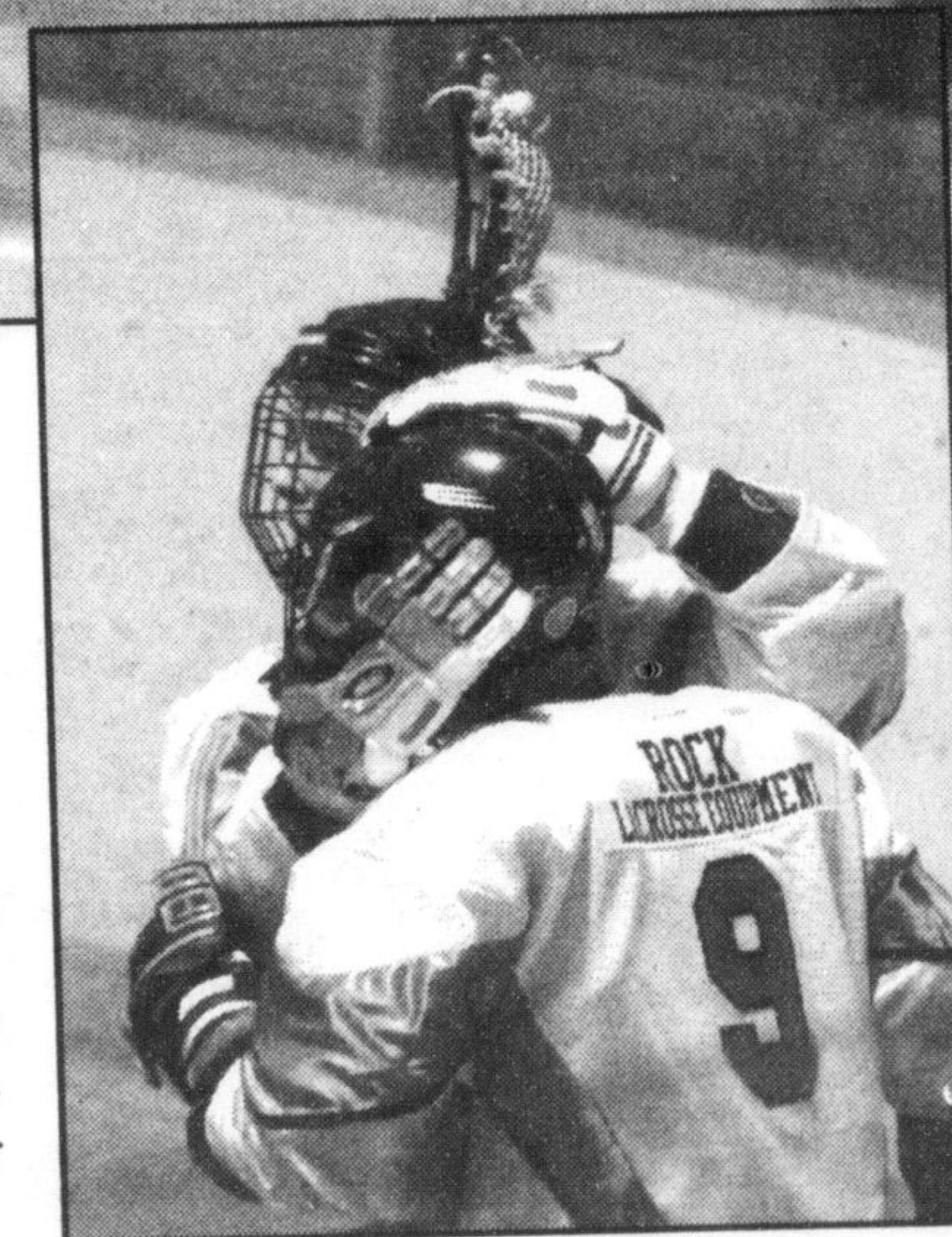
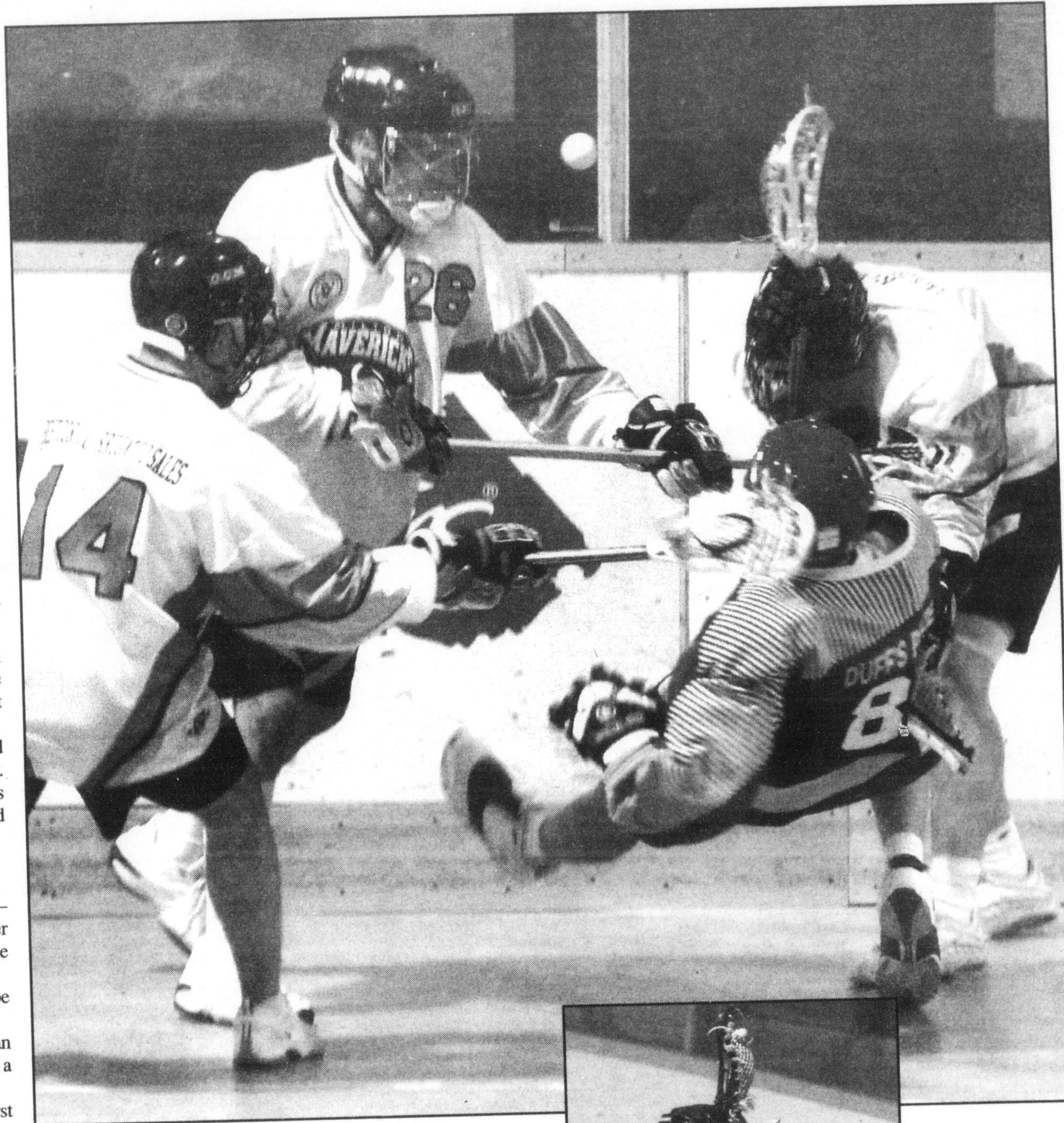
One particularly potent stretch — between the end of the first period and start of the second — saw them dent the twine five times in under two minutes.

Hagel counted four goals overall while tallying twice were Mewhinney and Drew Petkoff — one of three Hamilton-area players on the Mavericks.

Counting singles were MacDonald, Justin Corke, Kyle Goertz, James McIntosh and Paul Pedulla.

Two nights earlier against Halton Hills, Milton held three separate leads through the first half but were pretty much non-existent for the balance of the home-opening contest and were hammered 20-8.

Pedulla came back a little earlier than expected from a thigh injury and while impressive through the first period — with a goal and two assists — aggravating pain cut his first night back short after 20 minutes.



Milton triple teams a Spartan opponent while (inset) Derek Mewhinney and Kyle Hagel (9) celebrate a second-period goal Saturday.

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PAINE**

Goertz and Matt Decaire, one of the more promising youngsters in the lineup, each had two goals and an assist.

Before a home-opening crowd of about 225, the Mavericks faltered down the stretch against the 2002 Founder's Cup hosts and were particularly ineffective through period two — getting outscored 10-2.

Milton begins a two-game road trip in Guelph Thursday. Friday the team is in Markham.

The Mavericks return to Tonelli next Thursday, May 9 to take on Owen Sound. Game time is 8 p.m.

**Maverick notes:** Local lacrosse players Kyle Arbuckle, Sandy Chapman and Corey Leigh — who're now toiling in the professional ranks — were on hand to help the Mavericks kick off their new season Thursday.



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